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HIS MAJESTY, THE MANCHU EMPEROR
Posed in the Chinese manner, Forbidden City Palace, Peking, 1924;
with his signature.

Frontispiece to The Open Court

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THE YOUNG MANCHU EMPEROR

BY JOHN GILBERT REID

On March 1, 1935, the *Ta Man-chou Ti-kuo* (great Manchu empire) observed its first anniversary, with appropriate exercises, parades, and ceremonies. Its twenty-nine-year-old emperor at Hsin-king (new capital) had weathered what turned out to be a fairly quiet year, in spite of gloomy prognostications and dire threats twelve months earlier when he resumed imperial status.

The youthful monarch's realm included a large portion of the original Manchu empire founded by his ancestors prior to their conquest of China. Three hundred years ago—when the first American colonies were forming along the north Atlantic coast—the *Ta Ming Kuo* (great bright empire) was disintegrating through rebellion and a new empire was emerging north of the Great Wall. This was the *Man-chou-kuo* (Manchu empire) which in 1636 inaugurated the dynastic name of *Ta Ch'ing* (great pure) and in 1644 captured the dragon throne in the Forbidden City at Peking. This Manchu dynasty reigned at Peking until February 12, 1912; but its last emperor was destined once more to reign over the domain of his Manchu-Mongol forefathers.

The modern state of Manchuria—comprising the former *tung san shêng* (eastern three provinces) and Jehol province—lies entirely north of the Great Wall and east of the meridian of Peking; it covers a territory formerly anglicized as Manchuria and eastern inner Mongolia. Its inhabitants three centuries ago were mostly Tartars (Manchus, Tungusic tribes, Mongols); yet a growing Chinese colony already was being attracted to the southern portion of Manchuria. Today the Chinese population predominates over all other racial strains; and the Manchus, for the most part apparently, have merged culturally with the Chinese. The Mongols, in the western section of the new state, remain a separate race; and Korean, Japanese, and Russian elements add to the confusion.

When in 1644 the Manchu empire spread south of the Great Wall, its territory extended over a vast region. From the Pacific ocean in the east and the Amur river valley in the north to the Yellow Sea and Great Wall in the south and the Gobi desert in the west, this original *Man-chou-kuo* was no trifling rival for the Ming dynasty at Peking. The Manchu emperor possessed a symbol of imperial authority acquired from his Mongol allies, expelled from Peking in the fourteenth century; and his armies were experienced from years of fighting and invasion. Manchus, Mongols, and Chinese served the new dynasty; even Korean detachments were on hand; for the king of Korea acknowledged the overlordship of the Manchu ruler at Mukden, rather than that of the Chinese Son of Heaven at Peking. Despite a small population compared to China's, the Manchu empire's forces swept southward and in less than twenty years drove out the last Ming pretender. The *Ta Ch'ing Kuo* (great pure empire) was established.

The famous founder of this dynasty died near Mukden in 1626; his remarkable eighth son, who succeeded him, died there in 1643; and a five-year-old grandson was chosen for the vacant throne. This boy emperor was six when he became the first Manchu Son of Heaven at Peking, where he resided in the Forbidden City from 1644 until 1661. He was the father of the illustrious K'ang-Hsi emperor, who, in turn, was the grandfather of the no less celebrated Ch'ien-Lung emperor. These two rulers each reigned a full cycle of sixty years; and the Ch'ien-Lung emperor died in retirement the same year as George Washington.

From that date the splendor of the dynasty began to fade, but another century elapsed before history recorded the end of Manchu sovereignty over the vast realm called China. The last emperor, who was six years old when he abdicated his political rights in favor of the Chinese people, did not relinquish his imperial title, nor certain prescribed privileges and duties, among them the proper care of the tombs of his imperial predecessors. These are situated near Mukden and northeast and southwest of Peking.

Long before his birth, the last Manchu emperor's fate was significantly affected by foreign influences. His great-grandfather was reigning when British forces compelled the signature of the treaty of 1842 at Nanking. His grandfather's elder brother was reigning when the southern T'ai-p'ing rebels almost captured Peking and when Franco-British forces did reach the capital, causing the court

THE LATE TZŬ-HSI, EMPRESS DOWAGER

to flee to Jehol, and compelled the signature of new treaties in 1860. His uncle was reigning when a third foreign war was won by

France, the great Mohammedan rebellion was successfully suppressed, and Japan by a fourth war compelled the signature of the treaty of 1895 at Shimonoseki, which ushered in the "scramble" among the great powers for economic partition of China.

Courtesy of the late Prince Yu-lang.

PRINCE YÜ-LANG
Adopted Grandfather of the Manchu Empress.

This uncle, the eager young Kuang-Hsü emperor, was respon-

sible in 1898 for the "hundred days" of reform, when he tried to modernize his realm in order to prevent its disintegration and collapse. But his brave effort failed, and two years later the Boxer uprising brought an international army to Peking. For a second time the court fled, this time to Shensi province in the west. From that day the emperor might have been restored to power by international action if only the powers had been able to agree.

The siege of Peking's foreign legations in 1900 marked a turning point in the career of China's last emperor, although he was not born until February 11, 1906. If in 1898 his uncle had not defied the real "power behind the throne," the old T'zŭ-Hsi dowager empress, she might not have relegated him to impotent obscurity. If her loyal Manchu adviser Jung-lu had not then helped her to frustrate her nephew's reform program and again, in 1900 if Jung-lu had not prevented the Boxers from wiping out the foreign legations, thus saving her regency and the dynasty from destruction at the hands of the victorious foreign states, he would never have been grandfather of an emperor.

After the humiliating and costly settlement of 1901, the "Venerable Buddha," as the old dowager was popularly called by her subjects, realized her future success demanded a "new deal." So she began by discarding the then heir to the throne, the son of a Manchu Boxer prince. A new heir was needed, since her nephew the emperor was childless. However, he had a younger unmarried brother, the second Prince Ch'un, whose fiancée committed suicide in 1900 when the court fled from Peking. Because Jung-lu twice saved her from ignominy, the old dowager resolved to reward him —and incidentally strengthen her own position—by making one of his many daughters the mother of the future emperor.

Jung-lu did not live to see his grandson, but he approved the marriage of his daughter to the youthful Prince Ch'un. Their son was to become heir to the deposed Kuang-Hsü emperor and, at the same time, also to the old dowager's own son who preceded her nephew on the dragon throne and left no heir. While her arrangements were not announced, they were known to those chiefly concerned; and, when the first son of the union was born in 1906, he was hailed and cared for as the heir of an emperor, rather than of a prince. The baby boy was carried to the Forbidden City at the earliest opportunity by his proud mother to give personal thanks to the old dowager empress. This incident indicated his choice as heir to the throne.

Nevertheless, the child continued to live at home with his parents in their palace in the northern part of Peking; and not until his imperial uncle was mortally ill did the baby boy actually assume his place as "son and heir" of two emperors. This occurred on November 13, 1908. Next day, the public was told, the Son of Heaven ascended, dragon-borne, on high; and his heir, his brother's son, was proclaimed emperor below. On November 15, 1908, the old dowager herself suddenly expired, leaving her young niece, widow of the baby emperor's uncle, to head the Yehonala clan at court. She was the Lung-Yü dowager empress; and her "son," the emperor, early in 1909 inaugurated the Hsüan-T'ung reign, in accordance with custom.

The child, born in 1906 to head the Manchu imperial house, was named P'u-yi. The character *P'u*, his family name, denoted his particular generation in descent from the founder of the house; while the *yi*, his personal name, distinguished him from other members of his generation. For example, two older princes of his generation, great-grandsons of the Tao-Kuang emperor, were P'u-lun, heir to the senior branch of the family, and P'u-wai, heir to the princedom of Kung, likewise senior to the princedom of Ch'un. Both princes were grown men, logical candidates to succeed P'u-yi's uncle in 1908; and they failed only because the old dowager empress refused to yield by breaking her promise to Jung-lu and his widow.

When the infant P'u-yi became emperor, his parents became his subjects, as he was no longer legally their son. His "mother," the newly widowed empress, retained the power of veto over every act of the prince regent, actual father of the emperor. Prince Ch'un and his wife, therefore, did not lose all control over their eldest son, despite his removal to the Forbidden City where they were not allowed to reside. So long as Prince Ch'un remained regent, coöperating in the government, under appointment of the late dowager empress, he might exercise influence on behalf of his son. A younger son, P'u-chieh, however, became heir to his title. Still, the baby emperor inherited characteristics from both sides of his family.

Through his father, the son was a direct descendant of the founder of the Manchu dynasty, but also a grandson of a Chinese, mother of the second Prince Ch'un. The first prince of this name, though a conservative nationalist, did not limit his consorts to Manchus, as was the rule for heads of the Ch'ing house. While his

THE BABY HSUAN-T'UNG
An early likeness taken in the Forbidden City, Pekin.

chief wife, a sister of the T'zŭ-Hsi dowager and mother of the Kuang-Hsü emperor, was a Manchu, his secondary wives or concubines were not all of the same race. Thus a Chinese girl happened to be mother of the son who succeeded to his princely title, the elder son having previously succeeded to the throne left vacant by a first cousin. This Chinese girl was the mother of a younger son, Tsai-t'ao, later a staunch monarchist.

Yet, although the second Prince Ch'un and his brother Tsai-t'ao were half Chinese by birth, they were wholly Manchu by education, environment, and preference. They possessed the polished manners of the Manchu aristocrat, heirs of ten generations of rulership; they were proud of their race and ancestors; and they considered themselves natural leaders of the *Ta Ch'ing Kuo*. Nevertheless, they were not totally ignorant of the modern world. The young Prince Ch'un was dispatched to Germany in 1901 on a mission to apologize for the Boxer murder of Berlin's envoy at Peking; and he absolutely refused to kotow to the emperor William II, as desired by his officials. Prince Tsai-t'ao in 1910 visited Japan, the United States, England, and Europe on a military mission and became a great admirer of Germany's vivacious sovereign.

Through his mother, the baby emperor doubtless inherited many of his finer qualities. His maternal grandfather Jung-lu was an outstanding man, a Manchu whose ability was tested, whose loyalty could not be questioned, and whose foresight was not dimmed by a high sense of duty to his friend and superior in station, the T'zŭ-Hsi dowager. Jung-lu flouted her command when he deemed her mistaken, as in 1900; but he did so knowing his life might be forfeited. On the other hand, two years earlier, he stood out as her servant, in opposition to the reforming young emperor; but he did so knowing that her position, as well as his own life, was threatened. After the Boxer cataclysm, when he shared in difficult negotiations with the foreign powers, he adopted an attitude in favor of gradual reformation of the empire's political system. He advocated no sudden changes, which he regarded as unworkable; yet he stressed the need of real reforms, especially as to taxation and relief of poverty in the provinces. His death in 1903 was a serious blow indeed to the old dowager-regent, and she was obliged to rely thereafter chiefly on Chinese officials for advice.

Jung-lu's wife also was a favorite of the old dowager; and it has been said that she herself arranged the marriage of her best friends.

It is not surprising then, that she should later arrange the marriage of their daughter to a brother of her nephew the emperor, thus deciding the throne succession, insuring her clan's continued leadership at court, restoring friendly relations between her clan and her nephew's, and cementing her friendship with Jung-lu and his wife. The daughter who married young Prince Ch'un and became mother of P'u-yi was herself a remarkable woman. As the wife of the prince regent and actual mother of the emperor, her social rank was high at Peking; but she was not a woman to restrict her movements owing to social customs. Instead, possessing an independent spirit, a flair for new things, an insatiable curiosity, and a seeming recklessness, she often scandalized conservative court circles and especially her husband, who could not control her, by her interests and escapades.

Poor Prince Ch'un had no easy rôle to play at Peking. His wife was a problem; and his political career was nearly wrecked by feuds within feuds, by court intrigues, by domestic complications, by international disputes. The youthful Lung-Yü dowager, his brother's widow, checkmated him at every turn. She it was who forced him to dismiss two prominent progressive officials, the Chinese Yüan Shih-k'ai and the Manchu Tuan-fang; and, ironically enough, she it was who, in conjunction with Yüan, forced the emperor's father to give up his regency on December 6, 1911, and then, early in 1912, again at Yüan's behest, ratified the Manchu dynasty's abdication. Tuan-fang, meanwhile, in November, 1911, was murdered on a mission for the government to rebellious Szechuan province.

In the brief, troubled regency of his father, the "little emperor," as he was affectionately called by his subjects, spent his childhood in a court ridden by eunuchs and inhabited by relicts of former emperors. No man was permitted overnight in the palace, of course, and the little Son of Heaven had no playmate companions. There is a story that he refused to be comforted when first taken to the palace, because a beggar boy whom he befriended at his father's home, the "little cat" who used to scratch in the garbage, was separated from him. Finally, this lad was installed, properly washed, dressed, and instructed, as a comrade for the emperor; and he immediately ceased crying and welcomed his friend to the strange surroundings.

At any rate, the baby emperor soon adapted himself to his new palace home and was trained strictly by his elders in the ways of oriental majesty. Ceremonials, he found, were an important feature

of his existence; and he had to pay due respect always to the several widows of his two predecessors, the two emperors whose son and heir he had become. When grown, he would be expected to raise two sets of sons in their honor. Not until he was in his sixth year, however, did his formal education commence; the first ancient tutors appointed in the summer of 1911 took him in charge and instructed him in Chinese and Manchu language, literature, and history. Before much progress could be made, the abdication was negotiated. The "little emperor" no longer was Son of Heaven.

After his father's retirement as prince regent, the sturdy, little fellow in the Forbidden City was cut off more than ever from his natural parents. The Lung-Yü dowager was his "mother," ranking lady at court, spokesman for the Manchu imperial family. She continued to receive attention, not only from loyal adherents, but also from Chinese republican authorities; for she was still recognized in her capacity as chief guardian for the *Ta Ch'ing* emperor, in his new rôle of foreign monarch dwelling in the heart of Peking.

Next to her ranked various secondary consorts of the two preceding emperors; and to all of these dowagers the small boy made filial pilgrimages. His tutors, learned men of the classical school, were old enough to be his grandfathers; in their presence he again observed strict rules of etiquette. An imperial tutor had privileges no other man might claim; he was allowed to be seated in his pupil's classroom. Among his elderly grand guardians was a Chinese, Hsü Shih-ch'ang, former viceroy of Manchuria, close friend of President Yüan Shih-k'ai, and later chief executive at Peking. Only occasionally did the little emperor enjoy the company of children; usually women, eunuchs, and learned scholars monopolized his time.

Only now and then, at long intervals, did anything unusual happen to him. Early in March, soon after the abdication, republican troops mutinied and rioted at Peking; flames mounted skyward east of the palace; but the imperial guards protected the Forbidden City. Early in July, 1917—when the emperor was eleven, the republican régime was in shreds, and war waged in Europe—old Chang Hsün abruptly put him back on the dragon throne. For ten hectic days the court was in a state of utmost excitement. Then an airplane bombed the Forbidden City, fighting broke out in nearby streets, Chang Hsün's residence was set on fire, he fled to the Netherlands legation, and all was over. But such interruptions to routine were few and far between. Studying, ceremonials, rituals, audiences, feasts: a monotonous repetition, year after year.

In spite of all this, the boy emperor's inherited characteristics were not wiped out. He did not lose his independence of spirit, his daredevil nature, his incurable curiosity. His intellectual powers were trained in an ancient but rigorous school; his artistic powers were permitted free play in learning how to be an expert calligrapher; and his mental horizon was not confined even to the vast field embracing the Chinese classics, the written and spoken Chinese and Manchu, legend and history. A breath from the great world outside his palace walls came to him; he had a chance to read Chinese newspapers and periodicals; cousins visited him and told him about the chaotic situation in the world beyond his courts. China was disorganized; the foreign nations were fighting bloody battles on land and sea; Japan held Shantung province.

Time slipped by. The Lung-Yü dowager empress died just a year after the abdication; and President Yüan Shih-k'ai gave her a state funeral. The "lustrous" dowager, sister of the "pearl" whom the unlucky Kuang-Hsü emperor preferred, was ranking lady now at court, official "mother" of the boy emperor. He was beginning to chafe; for he was in his teens. In February, 1919, he was thirteen —somewhat older by Chinese reckoning. He did not then realize a new phase of his life was beginning.

The world war was ended; a peace conference, to impose terms on vanquished countries, was in session; the future of Shantung was coming up for decision at Paris. China was still split asunder, with rival régimes at Peking and Canton. The German emperor was exiled in Holland and might be tried for his life; the Russian tsar and his family were murdered by communists, who controlled the former empire; the Austro-Hungarian empire was torn apart, partitioned; the Turkish empire was a republic. But he, the Manchu emperor, lived quietly in his Peking palace, his knowledge increasing year by year; and now, it seemed, a new tutor, a foreigner, was appointed through his guardian, President Hsü, to instruct him.

The imperial court was experiencing a change, indeed, when a Scot, an Oxon, with honors in history, a British civil official, but a Chinese scholar, Reginald Fleming Johnston, from Weihaiwei, Shantung, entered the Forbidden City in March, 1919, without remunerating the eunuch custodians of the gateways, to begin English lessons with the boy emperor. What effect this simple enterprise had, not only on the pupil, but on his court and on China in general, may never be fully known, although the tutor relates part of the story in a fascinating book, *Twilight in the Forbidden City* (1934).

Courtesy of Sir R. F. Johnston, K.C.M.G.,C.B.E.

AT THE EMPEROR'S TIENTSIN HOME

From left to right: The famous Chinese calligraphist, Cheng Hsiao-hsu; the emperor; a Chinese general; and R. F. Johnston, C.B.E.

It did not take long for the eager boy emperor to discover that he had a possible ally in his lonely struggle against stand-pat tendencies at court. While the new tutor did not encourage his pupil to rebel, this meant by no means that reasons for dissatisfaction would continue to be ignored. In time, as the British tutor interpreted western thought and practice through Chinese terms, the boy emperor began to discern differences between his court and other courts, between China and other states, between the Orient and other parts of the world. China was not the middle kingdom, the celestial empire, center of the universe; nor was he the Son of Heaven. As his horizons broadened, naturally he wanted changes in his own narrow sphere; and the opposition to change was practically unanimous among his elders.

Only Johnston sympathized with him; and the next few years made their contacts closer and far more cordial than any the emperor had ever enjoyed. Western influence crept into the conservative court, into the artificial palace routine, into the classical lessons. Each slight change was a step forward for the boy emperor. His foreign tutor, of course, aroused the antagonism of all who favored the *status quo*.

The boy emperor was not allowed to venture forth from his palace gateways except in fancy; but frequently a cousin—a son of Prince Tsai-t'ao or of Prince P'u-lun—shared his lessons, in English or Chinese, with one of the tutors. His brother P'u-chieh was permitted to visit him; occasionally other young guests came to pay their respects. As a rule, the emperor remained isolated; and his British tutor alone gave him an opportunity to talk freely. Yet he had western objects, such as a bicycle to ride within the palace precincts when he tired of dignified, processional walks on his pony. He was not entirely cut off from the outer world, so full of modern contrivances, so constantly beckoning him to break away from customary procedure. By the time he was in his sixteenth year—older by Chinese reckoning—he was consciously desirous of something different.

He was proficient in his Chinese and Manchu studies; he was progressing in his English lessons; but this was not enough for him. His elders—dowagers, tutors, guardians, imperial household entourage—were tentatively considering his betrothal. Hitherto every emperor came of age and married at about sixteen; and marriage might distract the youth from his growing discontent.

Whatever its cause, a tragedy proved the first chance of the boy emperor to flout his anxious trainers by emerging from the secluded Forbidden City. Early in October, 1921, his mother the Princess Ch'un, daughter of Jung-lu, suddenly died. The likeliest explanation was that she committed suicide by taking a customary overdose in protest against the attitude of the ranking dowager at court. Owing to a disagreement concerning the emperor's rights—he refused to accede to the dowager's views and actually declined to visit her as usual—his parents were summoned and lectured on their son's undutiful behavior. His father, shocked by such an awkward state of affairs, promptly fainted; but the emperor's mother kept her senses, returned home, and took the only effective means to answer the "lustrous" dowager. Alive, Princess Ch'un could not compete with her son's official "mother," but her spirit could do so.

When her death was announced, her son realized his own future was at stake; now was the time to declare his independence. Despite all opposition, he borrowed an automobile and drove for the first time in his life beyond the Forbidden City portals to the estate of his parents. He went there to participate in mourning for his mother; and he repeated this step, even motoring at night finally outside the Peking city walls to the summer palace where he knelt at the side of the road when his mother's funeral procession passed by. His mother gave him his first auto ride, his first glimpse of the outer world, his first taste of freedom; and henceforth the youth defended his rights more vigorously, more defiantly, as his elders regarded it.

First of all, he obstinately rejected any proposal that he marry three wives—the traditional number for an emperor, who might have over three score in his harem—and so bitter was the struggle that his betrothal was put off much longer than was desired by his court. Although he adopted the English name of Henry in intimate personal relations with his British tutor and in honor of the first Tudor king of England, who had but one wife at a time, the young emperor insisted on one wife only, his empress. Because compromise seemed inevitable, he eventually agreed to one secondary consort, as he was "heir" to two emperors; but he was in no hurry to be married, nor did he wish the wedding immediately to follow the betrothal. A story has it that a group of photographs of eligible Manchu girls was submitted to him, for the purpose of selecting a bride; that he picked, not the choice of his elders, but the prettiest one whom his

THE EMPRESS IN MANCHURIA
A recent likeness in imperial Manchu Dress.

elders did not prefer; and that he yielded to their wishes by assenting to their choice as his secondary consort.

In any case, the betrothal was proclaimed in March, 1922. His bride-elect journeyed at once to Peking with her father and her new

step-mother from Tientsin, where she had lived quietly since her childhood. Her father was created a duke, and she became a princess. The wedding was set for the autumn; and, meanwhile, imitating her imperial fiancé, the young girl commenced studying English with an American, first, Miss Miriam Ingram and, later, her sister Isabel, fresh from Wellesley.

During the next months the emperor testified to his discontent in several remarkable ways, outraging court tradition. He cut off his queue, thus conforming to modern practice, both foreign and Chinese. He had his near-sighted eyes fitted for glasses, thus saving himself much discomfort and pain, but ignoring an age-old assumption that the Son of Heaven had no imperfections. He chose an English personal name for his fiancée again honoring a Tudor sovereign by calling her Elizabeth. He installed a private telephone and bought an automobile. In June, 1922—after a war between rival republicans when his grand guardian President Hsü abandoned his post—the emperor informed Johnston that he had made up his mind to become a private citizen.

The young emperor was emphatic and eager about his plan, recklessly determined to escape from his prison court; he would take refuge at the British legation, he said, and there announce the abrogation of the abdication pact of 1912. He would voluntarily cancel his imperial rights to a useless title, an out-dated court, a large and expensive household, a republican pension far in arrears, and such other antiquated privileges as remained. The Chinese people—meaning the "five races," Manchus, Mongols, Chinese, Mohammedans, and Tibetans—would then know he had their interests at heart and was not seeking political favors for himself. With the greatest difficulty did Johnston induce his pupil to delay any such abrupt course of action, citing good and sufficient reasons. A wiser policy was advocated instead and reluctantly accepted by the disappointed, restless, impatient heir of the Manchu dynasty. This would mean more waiting, with China in a politically chaotic condition.

After further delays, the imperial wedding was celebrated with pomp and circumstance at Peking, the new republican president participating in the friendly festivities marking the unusual event. No emperor had been married in China in more than thirty years; the populace joined in doing the young imperial pair every honor. The emperor's uncle Prince Tsai-t'ao was in charge of wedding ceremonies; the British tutor arranged an informal reception at the

throne hall for a select group of foreign friends, including the diplomatic corps with families in their private capacities; and the republican régime at Peking sent delegates to congratulate the emperor. Presents were exchanged with the empress before she arrived at the palace during the night of December 1, 1922; she was welcomed there by the secondary consort who preceded her the previous night. The next few days were full to overflowing with rituals, ceremonials, audiences, feasts, theatricals.

At the reception to foreign guests on December 3, the newlyweds were introduced to a long line of representatives of various nationalities, headed by the Japanese minister. The emperor then read a brief greeting in English from the imperial dais and drank to the health and happiness of his guests; they, in return, did the same to the bridal pair. The traditional audience of loyal subjects soon followed, gorgeously robed Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, and others prostrating themselves outside the throne hall to the emperor on his throne within, hidden from their view; and a few delegates of both the old empire and the new republic presented themselves to the emperor. He had come of age; he was now recognized master in his court; and the dowagers retired in favor of the young empress.

But the emperor did not give up hope of discarding court existence; he and his brother Prince P'u-chieh secretly planned another attempt to escape to the foreign legation quarter. In February, 1923, P'u-chieh called *incognito* on the senior foreign diplomat, the Netherlands minister, and confided to him alone the plan of escape, beseeching his aid. He also deposited with the sympathetic envoy some brief-cases containing unspecified articles smuggled from the palace. The court officials and even the British tutor were not aware of this plan; yet it fell through. The emperor was not able to leave his palace unnoticed. The brief-cases, however, were duly put into safekeeping and probably contained personal property of the emperor.

In the next year nothing more was done, except that Johnston assumed his appointment as warden of the summer palace and prepared to negotiate the emperor's removal from the Forbidden City as soon as possible. The imperial household and the republican authorities were not favorably disposed to this change; and political uncertainties precluded any definite agreement between the emperor and the republic. Still, the emperor and empress did visit the summer palace and its lovely lake where his uncle was kept a prisoner without a view by the old T'zŭ-Hsi dowager. Meanwhile, the British

Courtesy of the Emperor.

MANCHU EMPEROR RECEIVES DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE
The Forbidden City, Peking, 1924.

tutor introduced his pupil to foreign guests who attended informal court gatherings; and even the "lustrous" dowager became reconciled to these social interludes before her death in 1924. The emperor met India's poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore and China's literary leader Hu Shih and wrote anonymous poems for the Chinese press; the imperial trio—emperor, empress, and secondary consort—often met together American-fashion with Miss Isabel Ingram, who showed them how to make fudge and other intriguing things; and eventually the emperor proudly owned a full evening dress, foreign-style.

Nevertheless, in the summer of 1923, he gained a victory which increased his popularity with friends of reform in China. One night fire swept through a portion of the Forbidden City, destroying unknown quantities of valuable treasures and threatening the entire court. Ancient red-tape prevented quick action to halt the conflagration; but the emperor sanctioned the help of a fire brigade from the Italian legation. Foreign aid extinguished the flames. The huge staff of eunuchs was held responsible for the outbreak, as many objects of art were found missing; and the emperor seized this op-

portunity, for which he had been waiting, to dismiss most of these palace retainers. Not only would this economy benefit a depleted court treasury, but the reduction of eunuchs would in itself cut out a cancerous growth undermining the Manchu court.

Before Johnston succeeded in transferring his pupil to the summer palace, the dreaded crisis arrived. In October, 1924, a military *coup d'état* overthrew the Peking government, and a radical stopgap régime was installed. On November 5 Fêng Yü-hsiang's armed forces surrounded the Forbidden City, demanded an interview with "Mr. P'u-yi," ordered him to countersign a new abdication document, and, when he demurred, expelled him and his court summarily from the palace. The emperor and his two girl-wives were driven under guard to Prince Ch'un's estate, which was kept under strict military supervision for the next three weeks.

Courtesy of the Emperor.

THE MANCHU EMPEROR
An informal likeness, his favorite, taken in 1924, in the Forbidden City Palace, Peking.

The emperor's property, both personal and dynastic, was confiscated; his title abolished; his court disbanded; his pension reduced. As a matter of fact, the pension soon lapsed altogether, nor was his property restored. This included vast dynastic possessions in land and treasures of art. Not until a fresh political turn at the end of November did the emperor—henceforth called "Mr. P'u-yi"—obtain some

Courtesy of Sir R. F. Johnston, K.C.M.G.,C.B.E.

A GROUP ABOUT THE EMPRESS

Taken at her home in Tientsin in 1925, showing various girl relatives; directly in front of the Empress is a young brother of her husband.

liberty. On November 27 and 29 he received his first foreign newspaper interviewers; on November 28 Johnston took him for a motor drive; and on November 29 the ex-emperor was smuggled into the foreign legation quarter.

Finally he found asylum at the Japanese minister's residence and remained there; his two wives were escorted a few days later by a Japanese legation secretary to rejoin the youthful refugee; and in mid-December the trio were installed in a separate red-brick house in the legation compound. There they stayed, enjoying informal social courtesies with friendly foreigners, until February 23, 1925. On this evening, when Johnston and Miss Isabel Ingram were guests at Washington's birthday festivities, the ex-emperor with a single retainer secretly boarded a railway train—the first in his life—and safely reached Tientsin. On the way the last Manchu emperor, barely nineteen, sat between two soldiers of Fêng Yü-hsiang, but they were totally unconscious of the slender, studious youth's identity. He spent the night at a hotel and next day moved into a rented house in the Japanese concession, where his family joined him.

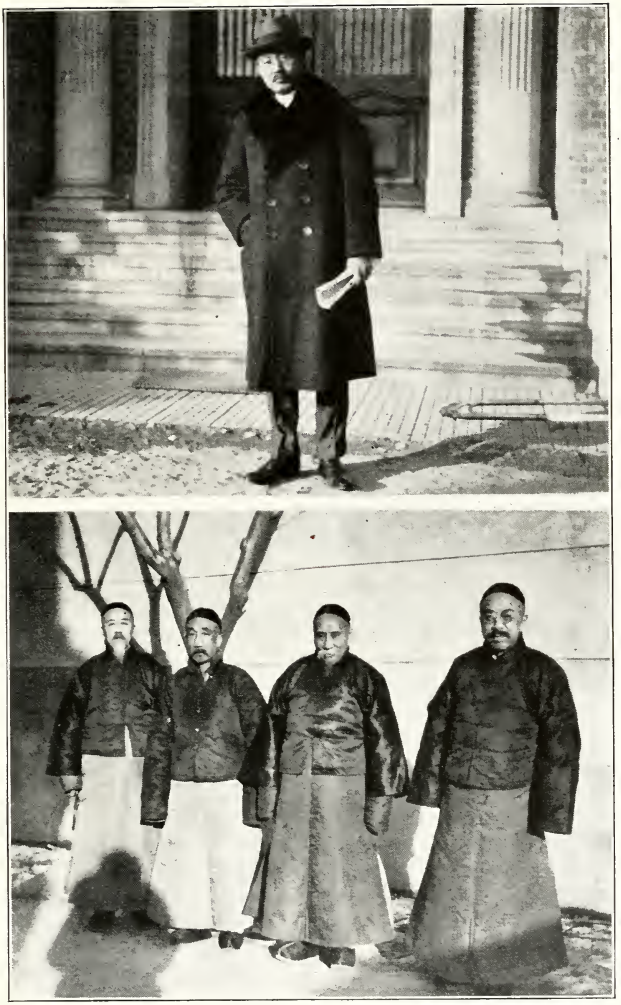
For over six years, failing to arrange a mutual settlement of his affairs with any republican régime, the ex-emperor resided quietly at Tientsin. His troubles, however, did not diminish. A virulent campaign threatening his very life was waged for several months; his British tutor found it necessary to answer absurd charges in the Chinese press; while the former emperor devoted his time to simple pursuits and avoided politics. He met foreign notables, such as Lord Willingdon, recently Canada's governor-general (now viceroy of India), and Prince George (now the Duke of Kent). He was not able to attend the funerals at Peking of his Chinese grandmother or of dowager consorts of his two predecessors on the dragon throne. Johnston resumed his duties with his own government; and in November, 1925, the Forbidden City was opened to the public at a nominal fee. The emperor's possessions, including personal snapshots, letters, and diaries, were exhibited at a reception to the diplomatic corps and other foreign guests. Dust lay heavily in the bedrooms of the former imperial trio.

In the summer of 1928 a terrible affliction befell the Manchu clans; their emperor's ancestral tombs were ostentatiously plundered northeast of Peking. The bodies of the great Ch'ien-Lung emperor and of the old T'zŭ-Hsi dowager empress were contemptuously dumped on the ground. The ex-emperor's financial state, which

THE JAPANESE LEGATION
Residence at Peking, December, 1924, where the Emperor and his family refugeed. The author is in the foreground.

obliged him to move into smaller quarters, prevented him from remedying all the damage; but he gave what he could, as he did for famine relief in north China. In 1930, after handing Weihaiwei back to Chinese control, Johnston departed for England to join London University, but before he sailed he took farewell of his affectionate pupil, who saw him off on the steamer and lingered until the last. In 1931, as if to cap the climax, the secondary consort sued her former imperial lord for divorce under recently promulgated republican laws. An unheard of situation in Chinese history developed, for he declared his intention of answering her suit himself in court. But his horrified relatives secured a compromise. The young woman, charging she had never been the emperor's wife, received her divorce and a grant of money; and with this sum she endowed a girls' school at Peking.

The autumn of 1931 proved eventful for the ex-emperor. At their farewell in 1930 he assured Johnston that another year would bring a change; and it did. When Johnston unexpectedly visited



Above: Mr. H. Arita, First Secretary at the Japanese Legation in 1924.
Below: The late Ch'en Pao-chen, the Emperor's Chinese tutor, third from the left, December, 1924.

him in the autumn of 1931, the ex-emperor had long confidential talks with him. Manchuria was in a ferment; the régime of the Changs, father and son, was collapsing before Japanese arms; agents from the Manchu homeland were urging the last Ch'ing emperor to enter his ancestral domain. In November riots broke out at Tientsin; the ex-emperor found a bomb at his door; he decided it was time to take another step on the tour he once boyishly planned to begin at Peking and to extend to Manchuria, Japan, America, England, and Europe.

Incognito, the twenty-five-year-old ex-emperor and two older companions—his loyal counselor, the Fukienese poet Chêng Hsiao-hsü, and his son—slipped away from Tientsin across the bay to Japanese-leased Kuantung, on the coast of south Manchuria. Subsequently the ex-empress followed her husband to the territory administered by Japan; and together they inspected historic spots. Agents of an independence movement pleaded with him to head a new government, a new state; his cousin P'u-wai, Prince Kung, actively promoted his imperial restoration, with Manchuria a revived Manchu empire. But the Japanese were not ready to support such a step.

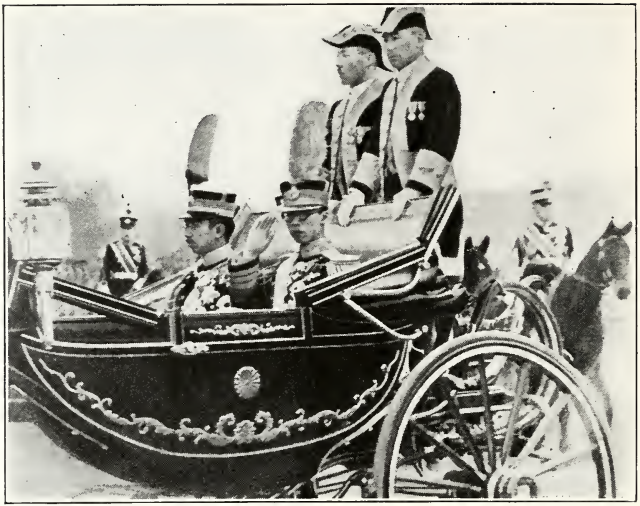
Since 1932 the last Manchu emperor once more has been a public figure, although usually dubbed "puppet" or nicknamed "Henry P'u-yi." In February, 1932, the independence of the new state of *Man-chou-kuo* (Manchu realm) was proclaimed at Hsinking, formerly Ch'angch'un; and a committee waited on the ex-emperor to request him to head the new state as *chih-chêng* (provisional chief executive). On March 9, 1932, the former emperor, just twenty-six, assumed the duties of this office at Hsinking; and his wife, who had been a semi-invalid for several years, accompanied him to their new abode, the former salt revenue administration building. There they have resided for more than three years.

Later in 1932 the Lytton inquiry commission called on the youthful head of the new Manchu realm; but on September 15, before its lengthy report was published at Geneva, the Japanese commanding general in Manchuria signed a protocol of recognition and alliance with Chêng Hsiao-hsü, prime minister of *Man-chou-kuo.* Thus officially acknowledged the new state survived the next intervening years of unrest and anxiety; and by March 1, 1934, the Japanese were ready to welcome the former Manchu emperor as emperor of the *Ta Man-chou Ti-kuo.*

THE EMPEROR AT TIENTSIN
Plain "Mr. Henry P'u-Yi."

Prospects were brighter, and well might the young emperor hope for a better future. His cousin Prince Kung in 1932 headed a central bank which unified Manchurian currency; his father Prince Ch'un in 1934 visited him at Hsinking; and many relatives, tutors, and loyal followers moved to Manchuria. A sister married a grandson of Premier Chêng and went to England for fifteen months, residing at Sir Reginald Johnston's London home; and there a baby girl was born early in 1934 to Mr. and Mrs. Chêng T'u-k'ai. Another sister married a brother of the empress of *Man-chou Ti-kuo;* and her father, Duke Jung, left Tientsin for Manchuria. Prince P'u-chieh, the emperor's brother, flew from Japan to Hsinking. Not forgetting his British tutor and friend, the emperor urged Sir Reginald to return once more to see him in his new surroundings. Further, in October he paid his first call at his ancestral tombs near Mukden and prayed to the founder of the Manchu dynasty.

Times were changing. Foreign newspapers interviewed him: news reel photographers snapped his picture; travelers came to call. A tiny central American republic, El Salvador, recognized his empire; and in June, 1934, the Japanese emperor's brother Prince Chichibu presented gifts and decorations to the Manchu imperial couple from the Japanese imperial pair. So the young emperor sent his old friend the prime minister to Tokyo and accepted an invitation himself to visit the *mikado* in 1935. As the Japanese foreign min-



IMPERIAL EQUALS AT TOKYO
The Manchu Emperor, saluting, with his host, the Japanese Emperor, on a state visit, April, 1935.

ister, in an address to the diet at Tokyo on January 22, 1935, announced:

> "Now that the work of laying the national foundations of Manchoukuo has been completed, her future progress will largely depend, I believe on unreserved coöperation between her people and ours. Especially in the economic field it may well be expected that by ministering to each other's wants we shall be able to achieve an ample measure of mutual well-being and prosperity. In these circumstances one cannot but be moved greatly by the announcement that His Majesty the Emperor of Manchoukuo will visit His Majesty the Emperor of Japan at Tokyo this Spring and thus add to ties of amity between two imperial houses. It is certainly a rare privilege and honor for our entire nation to have the opportunity of welcoming to our shores His Majesty the Emperor of Manchoukuo."

Nor was this all. In March, 1935, scarcely a year after the young Manchu emperor's enthronement at Hsinking, his minister to Japan and the ambassador there from Moscow signed a sales contract to transfer the Chinese Eastern Railway property from Russian control to the new empire. This, Tokyo circles maintained, constituted *de facto* recognition of the Manchu empire by a member of the League of Nations. An exchange of letters between the young emperor and the president of a small Caribbean island state, the Dominican republic, likewise indicated friendly relations. And the official visit of the emperor in April to Japan, where he was accorded honors due the first foreign ruler ever to be a guest of the *mikado* and his government, doubtless added a finishing touch to the young Manchu's imperial restoration.

WISHING HAPPINESS

The Manchu Emperor at the time of his wedding in 1922 wrote the character for "Happiness" on the occasion of a wedding anniversary of the author's father and mother.